

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 06373 161611Z

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-05

PRS-01 SP-02 SNM-02 IO-06 H-01 /045 W

----- 120512

R 161531Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9401

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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LIMDIS

FOR S/NM AMBASSADOR VANCE FROM AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, NL

SUBJ: US CONGRESSMEN'S CRITICISM OF DUTCH DRUGS POLICY

1. I WOULD WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE DRUG SITUATION IN THE NETHERLANDS WITH MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON DRUGS AND HAVE URGED THEM TO CONSIDER A VISIT HERE. RECENT CRITICISM OF THE NETHERLANDS EXPRESSED IN GENEVA BY TWO MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, LESTER WOLFF AND JAMES SCHREUER, HAS MADE HEADLINES IN DUTCH PAPERS. THE PRESS REPORTS THAT THEY SPOKE OF HOLLANDS SOFT ATTITUDE TOWARD DRUGS AND OF HOLLANDS ALLEGED FAILURE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE UN FUND FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL. IF ACCURATELY REPORTED, THE CRITICISM REFLECTS A LACK OF AWARENESS OF THE EFFORTS THE DTUCH HAVE MADE RECENTLY TO COMBAT NARCOTICS ABUSE. THESE EFFORTS INCLUDE STEPPED UP LAW ENFORCEMENT, THE ENACTMENT OF TOUGHER DRUG LEGISLATION WHICH TOOK EFFECT NOVEMBER 1, THE DECISION TO ASSIGN A POLICE OFFICER TO THE DTUCH EMBASSY IN BANGKOK, THE START OF A REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR HEROIN ADDICTS AND WORK UNDERWAY TOWARD A NATIONAL TREATMENT AND PREVENTION PROGRAM.

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PAGE 02 THE HA 06373 161611Z

2. PART OF THE REPORTED CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM IS AIMED

AT A FAT TARGET BUT MISSES IT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE NETHERLANDS CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNFDAC REALLY IS SMALL AND DOES NOT GIVE THE FUND ANY DISCRETIONARY RESOURCES. UNFORTUNATELY, THE DUTCH PRESS REPORTED THAT WOLFF AND SCHREUER CRITICIZED THE NETHERLANDS FAILURE TO CONTRIBUTE ANYTHING TO UNFDAC. THIS ERROR OF FACT WAS NOTED IN AN OFFICIAL REJOUNDER ISSUED IN THE HAGUE BY ROBBERT SAMSOM, HEAD OF THE INTERMINISTERIAL STEERING GROUP ON DRUGS, WHO NOTED THAT THE NETHERLANDS HAS DONATED A TOTAL OF 250,000 GUILDERS TO THE UNFDAC TO SUPPORT SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE MAGAZINE DRUG DEPENDENCE. AS A RESULT WE MISSED AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THE POINT THAT THE DUTCH ARE NOT DOING ENOUGH FOR THE FUND.

3. IN GENERAL, THE DUTCH ARE NOW AWARE THAT THEY HAVE A PROBLEM, ARE DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT BUT COULD DO MORE. THINKING IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO BE ABLE TO MEET WITH MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE TO POINT OUT THE AREAS WHERE PROGRESS IS BEING MADE AS WELL AS AREAS WHERE WE CAN IMPROVE COOPERATION WITH THE DUTCH; I HAVE SENT A TELEGRAM TO THEM (REFTEL BEING REPEATED TO YOU) URGING THEM TO VISIT THE HAGUE FOR A ONE-DAY DISCUSSION OF THE NETHERLANDS WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE SEPARATE, CANDID DISCUSSIONS WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, I HOPE THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE THE VISIT BEFORE THEY RETURN TO THE US FROM THEIR CURRENT TRIP, BUT IF NOT WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU WOULD FOLLOW THIS UP WITH THE COMMITTEE TO ARRANGE A CONVENIENT TIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE.
MCCLOSKEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976THEHA06373
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761142/aaaabjrs.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 MAY 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <30 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US CONGRESSMEN'S CRITICISM OF DUTCH DRUGS POLICY
TAGS: SNAR, NL
To: SECSTATE WASHDC GENEVA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006